

# Minutes of West Berkshire Cycle Forum

held on: Thursday 11 October 2018

**Present:** Cllr Stephen Ardagh-Walter (SAW)  
Sgt Simon White (SW) Thames Valley Police, Neighbourhood Sergeant  
Matt Stagg (MS) Thatcham resident and keen cyclist  
Josh Kerry (JK) West Berkshire Council Projects Team  
Neil Taylor (NT) Newbury Road Club  
Chris Boulton (CB) Greenham Common Trust & Newbury Road Club  
Gordon Oliver (GO) SPOKES  
Clive Tombs (CT) SPOKES (*minutes*)

**Apologies:** Cllr Jeanette Clifford  
Caroline Lane - SPOKES Chair  
Angela McMahon - SPOKES  
James Stephenson - Berks Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust  
Elaine Cox - West Berkshire Council Rights Of Way Team  
Tony Vickers

	<u>Action</u>
<p><b>1 WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>SAW welcomed all to the Cycle Forum. Apologies were recorded on behalf of Cllr Jeanette Clifford, Caroline Lane, Angela McMahon, James Stephenson and Elaine Cox.</p>	
<p><b>2 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING</b></p> <p><u>Newbury Station Cycle Hub</u>: after the last meeting, SAW had expressed concerns to Jenny Graham regarding cycle hub facilities apparently being only on one side of the station. JK reported a revised design is awaited from the scheme promoters.</p> <p><u>Cycle to Work Day</u>: noted that Caroline Lane had made approaches to local employers but limited interest. CL favoured a fresh initiative for 2019. CB noted change of date had perhaps not helped with Cycle To Work events this time round.</p> <p><u>Cycle route alongside/parallel to A339 between Monks Lane and Swan Roundabout</u>: in response to point raised by NT at last meeting, JK noted the proposed green corridor within the eastern portion of the proposed Sandford development, on west side of A339. Any works on east side of A339 unlikely in short-to-medium term, given current focus on utility diversions to allow for the new school access near the recycling site and the junction construction to follow.</p>	

**3 CYCLE THEFT AND CLOSE PASSING**

SW noted there had been 2 arrests in last two days in connection with cycle theft. Newbury Neighbourhood Police Team likely to receive additional team members shortly and this will be one of the issues they will be keeping tabs on.

Close passing: GO noted TV & Hants Roads Policing Unit having to focus limited resources on areas where there are more incidents involving cyclists, including Portsmouth and Southampton, so close-pass incidents has started off being something for Councils to try and address by means of education.

RBWM Council have a close-pass mat (more durable than Cycling UK ones) and open to sharing with WBC. GO explained the concept (0.75m from kerb as usual cycle riding position, 1.5m as safety zone – any vehicle coming inboard of 1.5m is close passing).

Discussion ensued. SW said police need input from WBC Traffic & Road Safety team on this; police are willing to work with WBC and representatives of cycle groups to raise awareness of implications of close passing.

SW will liaise with Caroline Lane [caroline.lane@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.lane@westberks.gov.uk) and her manager Cheryl Evans [Cheryl.evans@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Cheryl.evans@westberks.gov.uk) in first instance, to discuss how a close passing awareness event can best be run, and where.

**SW and  
Caroline  
Lane**

CT suggested B3421 Hambridge Road in Newbury as section of road where there has been mention, including in press, of close passing problem. MS referred to previous discussions about putting up banners on lamp columns to raise awareness.

**4 NCN 422 UPDATE**

JK updated. Construction of 2-way cycle track has started on south side of A4 east of Faraday Road, Newbury, stretching towards Thatcham.

This 2.5m width, 2-way cycle track, protected by kerb upstand and machine-laid, will have priority over all side roads except for the Tesco London Road car park access.

Narrow Boat pub site changes will involve, as part of the planning consent, handover of 4.5 metre strip of land to enable construction of the cycleway at this point.

In Thatcham, raised orcas – consisting of bolt-down rubber sections – will be used to protect the on-carriageway advisory cycle lanes.

Proposals for rural section between Theale and Thatcham now envisage using a mix of quieter roads and canal path. Section from Brimpton to Aldermaston and Tyle Mill/Sulhamstead could receive signs/markings from funding remaining after the Newbury-Thatcham works are completed.

**Action**

SAW asked why deviation from Colthrop down to Brimpton. JK explained traffic counts done and also noted hundreds of thousands of pounds investment would be required to provide cycle facilities on the A4 if that was to be a designated cycle route throughout.

JK explained there is some s.106 money in Lower Padworth/Beenham, part of which could be used to at least make the Beenham junctions safer for cyclists if this was to be agreed by Councillors.

MS queried are cyclists really going to deviate down to Brimpton. GO suggested long-term aspiration should be to upgrade the canal path throughout as NCN4.

SAW asked about timescales for Newbury-Thatcham. JK advised Hambridge Road to Lower Way will not be completed until 2019. Similarly Thatcham section works will be undertaken during 2019.

MS asked situation regarding Benham Hill. JK advised it is complete and will link up with the on-road advisory cycle lanes going into Thatcham. JK confirmed the on-footway shared sections on the north side of A4 will remain in place. Orcas will be trialled in section of A4 from Henwick Lane to Northfield Road.

**5 NCN 4 TOWPATH UPDATE**

JK advised not much to report. Canal & River Trust are ready to get on with construction of the Racecourse-funded section. Agreement document pending from WBC Legal team. Discussion confirmed Racecourse s.106 is planned to be focussed on the Ham Bridge to Newbury Football Club section, borne out by results of cycle counts.

GO expressed concern about severe deterioration of canal path – needs emergency repairs in many places including west of Newbury. GO and CT to report the deterioration again to C&RT and to Sustrans (especially the section around Bridge 66, also both sides of rail Bridge 65)

**GO/CT**

SAW to ask C&RT's Mark Evans to advise who the new contact is there and for an update.

**SAW**

Discussion followed. CB said Greenham Common Trust would be able to consider a bid for funding to upgrade a section of NCN4.

SPOKES need to get C&RT engaged – either party could submit a paper setting out the bid to CB in first instance. GCT can then consider scope to part funding, prior to any follow-on application to Veolia environmental fund.

**GO/  
SPOKES**

CB also suggested approaching Wasing Estate or Englefield Estate who might consider putting up some funding too.

JK noted Sustrans are also seeking funding to do certain exemplary sections. Highways England have offered Sustrans money to upgrade the section in the area of the M4 overbridge at Theale.

	<u>Action</u>
<p><b>6 HERMITAGE TO HAMPSTEAD NORREYS RAILWAY PATH</b></p> <p>JK advised WBC has gone for Planning permission to enable construction. Funding confirmed and contractors identified by Highways England.</p> <p>Construction due to start this FY on a 2.5km section between Furze Hill at north end of Hermitage (Pinewood) to Hampstead Norreys Village Hall. Majority of land is owned by Eling Estate, so will be known as Eling Way</p> <p>All agreed desirable to pursue extension south from Hermitage to Newbury, to keep momentum going.</p>	
<p><b>7 ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>SW gave out cycle marking kits - appreciated by all present.</p> <p>NT referenced the latest climate change report.</p> <p>MS suggested Cycle Forum members come up with proposals, for discussion and agreement at the next meeting, to underpin a revitalised Cycle To Work Day for 2019.</p> <p>CT and GO highlighted deterioration of advisory cycle lane on A343 St Johns Road eastbound – traffic avoiding utility trench and wearing away the lines. JK advocated reporting it at <a href="http://www.westberks.gov.uk">www.westberks.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Incorporating cycling measures into upcoming developments: SAW raised this matter and referenced the planned evolution of Supplementary Planning Guidance for Thatcham.</p> <p>GO flagged up issues with developers ignoring the issue of cycle parking. GO and JK respectively referred to the Cambridge and Oxford guidance and advocated it being adopted in West Berkshire. JK to discuss possibility with Jon Winstanley.</p> <p>Discussed also members as individuals and constituent groups responding to planning applications. Also representations to WBC Transport Policy and WBC Highways Development Control.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>CT</p> <p>JK</p>
<p><b>8 TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>18:00 Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at West Berkshire Council offices. Deborah Vince to book a room.</p>	<p>Deborah Vince</p>